

An uneven battle

PTI, Bridgetown

It will be David vs Goliath when title favourites South Africa take on spirited new entrants Afghanistan in their second and final Group C match for a Super Eights berth in the ICC World Twenty20 here on Wednesday.

They lost the opener against India but Afghanistan have shown the spark to be in the big league even though it would be too big an ask for them to upstage South Africa.

The first Affiliate Member of the ICC to qualify for a senior ICC event, Afghanistan have earned much admiration already for the stunning rise to prominence.

Led by Nowroz Mangal, a fan of Indian batting icon Sachin Tendulkar, they came to the mega event after winning the Qualifiers in United Arab Emirates, beating the more experienced Ireland in the final.

Commentators are still trying to get used to the war-ravaged country's cricketers, who are trying hard to make an impression. Their batsman Noor Ali found some recognition in the match against India after managing to pull off a half-century in the last game.

Imposing all-rounder Mohammad Nabi has also impressed after his fine show in the run up

to the ICC World Twenty20. He was the leading wicket-taker in Qualifiers with 13 scalps at an average of 10.53.

He also holds the distinction of being Afghanistan's first batsman to hit an ODI fifty with 58 in their first match against Scotland last year. While Afghan cricketers need elaborate introduction, the South African boast of players who are established international stars.

South Africa will have to have a really bad day in office to lose tomorrow. With in-form batsmen like Jacques Kallis, AB de Villiers and skipper Graeme Smith, the Proteas would look to get over the 14-run loss to India in their lung-opener.

Smith is, however, guarded in his assessment of the unknown rivals. "Afghanistan are a potential banana skin because they are unknown but they have a lot of talented cricketers, they've overtaken all the others in the minnow division.

It's going to be nerve-wracking playing them," Smith had said at the start of the tournament. "They have no fear and they have nothing to lose, which makes them dangerous," he added.

And perhaps the fear of the unknown is the only fear the South African would have to overcome when they face the Afghans tomorrow.

Women's chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Reigning national champion Sharmin Sultana Shirin and runner-up Shamima Akter Liza to maintain their joint lead in the points table with 9.5 points each after the tenth round of the Arlin Developer 31st National Women Chess Championship at the Narayangonj Club Auditorium yesterday.

WIM Rani Hamid of Titas Club, Masuda Begum of Barisal and Nazrana Khan Eva of Manikgonj share second position with 6.5 points each. In the tenth round: Shirin beat Dilara Jahan Nupur of Kustia, Liza beat Aeon Sarker of Kasparov School of Chess, Rani Hamid beat Masuda Begum, Eva drew with Mahmuda Haque Chowdhury Moly of Chittagong, Protiva Talukdder of Rajshahi beat Jahanara Haque Runu, WFM Zakia Sultana of Metropolitan Chess Club drew with Rokshana Titli of Pabna. Eleventh or last round games will be held today at the same venue.



Members of Hong Kong team, who will take part in the upcoming Asian Games Qualifying Tournament, jog during a practice session at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Premier League volleyball

SPORTS REPORTER

Bhai Bhai Sangha blanked East End Club in 3-0 sets in their clash of the National Bank Dhaka Metropolitan Premier Division Volleyball League at the Volleyball Stadium in Paltan yesterday.

Bhai Bhai took the first set 25-18 before taking the next two sets 25-19. In the other match of the day, BDR won 25-20, 25-20, 25-21 against Wari Club. There are four matches to be played today.

Hosts take

FROM PAGE 17
two-match unofficial Test series against West Indies A.

ITINERARY
May 5: Bangladesh A v South Africa A
May 6: West Indies A v South Africa A
May 8: West Indies A v Bangladesh A
May 9: Bangladesh A v South Africa A
May 11: West Indies A v South Africa A
May 12: West Indies A v Bangladesh A
May 14: Final

Salahuddin

FROM PAGE 17
national dailies and BFF general secretary Al Musabbir Sadi said that he received a lot of verbal applications. He however did not disclose the figure.

Sadi also informed that the BFF were allotted 290 tickets of 2010 World Cup in South Africa for the football family meaning BFF executive committee members, sponsors, organisers, current and former footballers and VIPs and then the general people.

But since the demand for tickets were more than the allocation the BFF has formed a committee that will decide the 290 lucky winners.

Sadi said that the BFF has got applications for around 500 World Cup tickets.

Maruf-less

FROM PAGE 17
game striking his league's 13th goal. The highest scorer of the previous edition capitalized on a through pass from substitute Abdul Baten Komol and cleverly sent the ball over goalkeeper Sabuj, who stood on the edge of the eight-yard box and had no way to stop the nearly 25-yard shot.

In the absence of coach Maruful Haque, assistant coach Mohammad Ponir guided the side to register a comprehensive victory. "The boys played accordingly and we are looking forward to winning the next four matches and we are hopeful of being able to do it."

Manager Amirul Islam informed that Maruf did not turn up because of an upset stomach.

Ponir, however, informed that Maruf did not come to the practice since their 2-2 draw against Farashganj SC.

TEAMS
MOHAMMEDAN: Aminul Haque, Arman Aziz (Abdul Baten Komol), Wali Faisal (Yamin Ahmed Munna), Zahid Hossain (Nasir Chowdhury), Emanul Haque Sharif, Dami Emanuel, Alam Bukola Oaleken, Shakil Ahmed, Arifur Islam Arif and Mofazzal Hossain Saikat.
BROTHERS UNION: Sabuj Das Ragu, Sawkat Russel, Tanmoy Hossain Taru, Murad Ahmed Milon (Moksudul Alam Bulbul), Nahidul Islam, Enock Bentil, Lutfar Rahman Noyon (Khalilur Rahman Noyon), Ripon Khan (M Adil), Yousuf Ali Khan and Tofazzal Ali Khan.
Yellow cards: Ripon (Brothers), Saikat (Mohammedan)
Referee: Abdul Hannan Miron

Colly for rain reform

AFP, Providence

England captain Paul Collingwood said there was a "major problem" with the rules for rain-affected matches after his side's eight-wicket loss to the West Indies in their World Twenty20 opener.

England made 191 for five, a challenging total in this format, here on Monday after being sent in to bat.

But, after a couple of downpours, the West Indies were left with a revised target of 60 in six overs under the Duckworth-Lewis method, which they achieved with a ball to spare.

The system, devised by English statisticians Frank Duckworth and Tony Lewis, has been widely regarded as the fairest yet in deciding rain-affected matches.

But there are signs it is struggling to come to terms with scoring rates in Twenty20, which wasn't even on the horizon when the method was first used back in 1997.

Monday's defeat was the second time in a year England had lost under the Duckworth-Lewis method to the West Indies in the World Twenty20 and left them with a winner-takes-all clash against Ireland here on Tuesday to join the hosts in the second round Super Eights.

"I think 95 per cent of the time when you put 191 runs on the board you are going to win the game," said Collingwood.

"I don't know what equation you should have but you shouldn't have that one.

"We've played a near perfect game but we've lost," the all-rounder added.

"There's a major problem with this

Duckworth-Lewis in this form of the game," Colingwood insisted.

"I've got no problems with it in the 50-over form. But I know it's made us very frustrated tonight.

"It certainly has to be revised for this form of the game."

West Indies captain Chris Gayle, who opted to field first, had some sympathy for England having seen his side knock the then hosts out of last year's World Twenty20 at The Oval in similar circumstances.

"I would support what Collingwood just said. I could have been in the same position as well," Gayle added.

"It's something that can be addressed, so it can be 'even Stevens' for both teams in the future.

"I'm happy, but it's just unfortunate for England."

Previous systems led to farcical conclusions such as at the 1992 World Cup in Australia where South Africa went from needing 22 runs off 13 balls to beat England in the semifinal to an impossible 21 runs off one ball following a rain break.

One of Duckworth-Lewis's advantages is that when a game is being threatened by rain the system is flexible enough for the target to change depending upon the number of wickets lost, rewarding the fielding side for dismissing opposition batsmen.

Now though the problem seems to be when play resumes after a rain break and the team batting second is left with a fixed target in a compressed number of overs that bears little relation to the first innings total.

Manikganj cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Kulfa Goshtli got a 24-run victory over Victoria Club in the Colonel (retired) Malek Smriti First Division Cricket League at Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

Batting first, Kulfa Goshtli scored 203 runs before being all out in 36.5 overs. Pallab played an unbeaten knock off 64 from 46 balls while Kajol added 56 runs from 71 balls. Apu picked up five wickets for Victoria Club.

In reply, Victoria Club managed 179 runs for nine wickets in 40 overs. Opener Rony struck 64 runs from 84 balls while Tarek scored 42 runs from 60 balls. Some and Mazed picked up three wickets each for Kulfa Goshtli. In today's match, Dashaara Palli Mangal Samity will face Provrat Sangha.

Rain fits WI

FROM PAGE 17
England started well thanks to their new South Africa born opening pair of Michael Lumb and Kieswetter.

Lumb, on his international debut, took 16 off one Ravi Rampaul over.

Fast bowler Rampaul's three overs cost a hugely expensive 52 runs in total.

But in-form West Indies all-rounder Darren Sammy, the man-of-the-match, checked England's progress with two wickets in the tenth over, bowling Collingwood for six and inducing Kevin Pietersen (24) to hole out to midwicket.

With England 88 for four at the halfway mark, Morgan and Wright consolidated before going for their shots, with England scoring 76 runs in the final five overs of their innings.

SCORES IN BRIEF
ENGLAND: 191 for 5 in 20 overs (Morgan 55, Lumb 28, Pietersen 24, Kieswetter 26, Wright 45 not out; Sammy 2-22)
WEST INDIES: 60 for 2 in 5.5 overs (Gayle 25, Chanderpaul 15 not out; Swann 2-24)
Result: West Indies won by eight wickets on D-L method.
Man-of-the-match: Darren Sammy.

It's not over for Murali

AFP, Providence

Muttiah Muralidaran could still feature for Sri Lanka in the World Twenty20, according to captain Kumar Sangakkara, after officials said he'd been ruled out with a groin injury.

A statement released by Sri Lanka Cricket in Colombo earlier on Monday said the

star off-spinner had been "advised to rest for two or three weeks" following a groin problem he suffered during the team's two-wicket opening match defeat by New Zealand here on Friday.

That would rule him out of the rest of the World Twenty20.

But Sangakkara, speaking after Sri Lanka's 14-run, rain-affected, win over Zimbabwe here on Monday, said Muralidaran -- whose place against the Africans was taken

by 25-year-old off-spinner Suraj Randiv -- would be given a chance to prove his fitness.

"We haven't ruled him out completely," Sangakkara told reporters. "We are going to give him a few more days to try and see whether he can get on the park and compete at 100 percent for us.

"If not we have Suraj Randiv who has had a very impressive six months in domestic and international cricket.

"He's bowled against some of the toughest opponents in the world on flat tracks in India and Bangladesh.

"He can field brilliantly, handle a bat and more importantly get through his four overs.

"The cover is there, of course you can't replace Murali, we would love to have him all the time, but we have tried to cover for changes to the team."

Earlier, the SLC statement appeared to indicate the World Twenty20 was over for 38-year-old vice-captain Muralidaran.

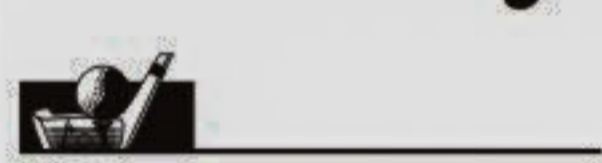
"Clinical tests revealed a grade one strain of his right adductor muscle," team physiotherapist Tommy Simsek said in the statement.

"Murali has been advised to rest for two to three weeks."

Muralidaran, who is the most successful bowler in history with a record 792 Test and 512 one-day wickets, took two wickets for 25 runs against New Zealand.

Unless Zimbabwe beat New Zealand by a huge margin here on Tuesday, Sri Lanka are set to go through to the Super Eights with the Black Caps.

MERCEDES-BENZ TOUR Udorn wins Pattaya Open



Thailand's Udorn Duangdechma made a career shot to win the 50,000 dollars Singha Pattaya Open on Sunday at Burapha Golf Club.

The 39-year-old played a majestic chip to three feet from a difficult position behind the 18th green and make a par and beat fast finishing Jay Bayron from the Philippines and Thailand-based Korean Baek Seuk-hyun by one stroke, said a press release.

Udorn brought out his black and orange tiger striped pair and roared to a bogey free four-under-par 68. The 10-year veteran on the professional circuit had a two-stroke lead at the start of the day in the second event of the year on the Mercedes-Benz Tour.

Ordinarily a 68 would be a safe final round but Bayron came after him with a 64 while Baek carded a 66.

A sudden-death play-off seemed on the cards when Udorn yanked his second shot left and long on the last but he did not disappoint the large local galleries. He had no green to work with for his chip from 20 yards.

Bayron was a man on mis-

sion and appeared his greatest threat.

He led the season-opening Mercedes-Benz Masters Philippines two weeks ago for the first three rounds before disappointingly fading on the final few holes. Clearly still in form and trying to make amends for that experience he also carded a bogey free round and came out of the chasing packed with three birdies in a row from the 14th.

Filipino Antonio Lascuna, second here last year closed with a 67 to tie for fourth with Thailand's Chaphai Nirat, who shot 68. They finished two behind the winner.

Pariya Junhasavasdikul from Thailand was a shot further back after firing a 68.

In an encouraging sign for golf in Vietnam, Tran Le Duy Nhat closed with a 68. He finished in joint 15th place on nine under for his best finish on Tour.

The Singha Pattaya Open is joint-sanctioned between the Mercedes-Benz Tour and the All Thailand Golf Tour.

The Mercedes-Benz Tour heads to Jakarta for the 50,000 dollars Kariza Indonesia Championship at Gading Raya Championship from May 5 to 8.



New Zealand bowler Nathan McCullam (L) celebrates with teammate Jesse Ryder after dismissing Zimbabwe's Craig Ervine (not in picture) during their World Twenty20 match at the Providence Stadium in Guyana yesterday.

Aussies now serious!

AFP, Gros Islet

FROM PAGE 17
When Australia's Michael Clarke took part in the first ever international Twenty20 match, against New Zealand five years ago, the emphasis was very much on "fun".

New Zealand players dressed up in retro kit, with some sporting hairstyles more associated with the 1960s and 70s.

Australia captain Ricky Ponting made 98 as his side won by 44 runs in Auckland but questioned whether the "novelty" of Twenty20 would endure.

The emphasis in Australian cricket remained very much on Tests and one-day internationals so that the side's defeat by outsiders Zimbabwe at the inaugural World Twenty20 in Cape Town was brushed aside by Australian fans.

Australia were well beaten by India in the 2007 semifinal and at last year's edition in England, they were knocked out in three days after defeats by the West Indies and Sri Lanka.

But that exit was overshadowed

by the context of an Ashes tour and when Ponting announced he was retiring from international Twenty20, there was a general sense of relief the star batsman would still be available to play 'proper' cricket for his country.

However, with Clarke now their captain in this format, Australia began their 2010 World Twenty20 campaign with a 34-run win over defending champions Pakistan here on Sunday.

And top order batsman Clarke said the advent of the tournament had led to a change in Australian attitudes towards Twenty20.

"I think now there's a world championship, that plays a big part," he said.

"When I played in my first Twenty20 match, we played against New Zealand and they were growing moustaches, not cutting their hair and wearing 1960s outfits for the game.

"Everybody is taking the game a lot more seriously now and in tournaments like this, you want to do well. We haven't done as well as we would like but we've started well."

Australia complete their group programme against Bangladesh in Barbados on Wednesday and, having seen his team lose to Zimbabwe in a warm-up fixture, Clarke was adamant he would not be underestimating Bangladesh.

"It just shows in this form of the game, you have to be at your best, it doesn't matter who you are playing against," he said.

"We certainly won't be taking Bangladesh lightly. They've got some wonderful Twenty20 players who are very aggressive with the bat."

Div I b'ball
SPORTS REPORTER

Dharmketu Club destroyed Mohammadpur Basketball Club 136-31 in their clash of the Premier Bank First Division Basketball League at the Dhanmondi Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

Dharmketu led the first half 60-14. Mithun scored 37 and Sajid scored 32 points for the winners.

In the other match, Eagles Club narrowly edged Flame Boys Club 59-57 after leading the first half 41-37. Wahidul and Manjil scored 21 and 19 points respectively for Eagles Club.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Penny prez
4 Greet the villain
7 Drive away
12 Auto
13 Dadaist Jean
14 Adult insect
15 Storm center
16 Heart of a tennis racket
18 Sinbad's flyer
19 Avis competitor
20 Act like a goat
22 Varnish ingredient
23 Under-stands
27 Piercing tool
29 "Yay!"
31 Texas mission
34 Head-strong?
35 Universe
37 Menagerie
38 Get a glimpse of

DOWN
1 Tart in tone
2 Louisiana marsh
3 Upright
4 Wild party
5 "1984" author
6 Phantom's bailiwick
7 Cracker name
8 responder (Abbr.)
9 Political patronage
10 Id counterpart
11 Sodom evacuee
17 Engrave
21 Debbie Reynolds role

23 Bride-zilla's tolerator
24 Detergent brand
25 Highland headgear
26 Timid
28 Court
30 Roswell sighting
31 Expert
32 Part of UCLA
33 Venomous viper
36 Palm starch
37 Barb
40 Get extra value from
42 Decree
43 Criminal
44 Quiz answer, maybe
45 Tosses in
46 "— she blows!"
48 Scatter seeds
49 Reaction to fireworks
50 Sub-machine gun
51 — U.S. Pat. Off.

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	S	S	H	A	R	D	F	I	S	T
B	A	L	O	L	I	O	N	C	E	
S	C	A	L	L	I	O	N	O	D	O
L	E	D	T	O	P	D	O	W	N	
R	E	L	I	E	R	A	T	O		
I	C	I	R	A	M	S	E	P	T	S
F	R	O	M	O	E	D	B	A	N	T
T	U	N	E	S	D	O	C	V	I	A
G	A	P	W	O	O	I	N	G		
A	L	M	A	N	A	C	N	I	L	
B	A	I	T	G	A	N	G	L	I	O
L	I	M	O	E	E	P	E	O	R	E
E	D	E	N	D	O	O	R	N	O	W

Yesterday's answer 3-19

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12			13			14					
15			16			17					
18			19								
20		21		22			23	24	25	26	
		27	28			29	30				
31	32	33				34					
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38				39	40			41	42	43	44
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48	49	50	51							52	
53						54				55	
56						57				58	

CRYPTOQUIP

RT EGNCKHWM PMGNT QPCMQ
GKM ZCRYVMWMT EGVVHIS
GYGKW, GIO H PGNM XMZCRM
NMKT XKCSGI - PMGK WMO.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF I GIVE YOU SOME CUSTOMIZED TIPS ON BUYING A FORMER CHEVY MODEL, ARE THOSE BLAZER POINTERS? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals Y